

IDAHO WOLF MANAGEMENT PROGRESS REPORT January 1 – January 31, 2008

Monitoring

Aerial telemetry flights and end of year counts are completed. Tentative minimum wolf population estimates are between 800-850 for Idaho, 88 packs and 39 breeding pairs. Final end-of-year population estimates will be completed by end of February and included in the annual U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Idaho reports.

Now is the time when wolves begin dispersing great distances prior to the breeding season. Often these wolves may be close to development and may cause some conflicts if not just increased sightings. A couple wolves of note include a young male Idaho wolf that left Idaho (from a pack near Boise) in 2006 and ended up in northern Yellowstone, seen with females then disappeared. Recently that wolf was found in the Beartooth Pack near Crandall, Wyoming. Also, a wolf from Paradise Valley north of Yellowstone that was part of the Mill Creek pack moved to the Wyoming-Utah-Idaho border area in September and in January moved to southeast Idaho.

Management

From January 1 – January 31, 2009, agencies have documented one dead wolf in Idaho, killed illegally. U.S.D.A. Wildlife Services (tentatively) confirmed that wolves killed one calf and one dog. Four wolves were found with radio-collars on mortality signal over the past few weeks, but because of the conditions we have been unable to retrieve them and determine cause of death.

Table 1. Confirmed wolf depredations and wolf mortality in Idaho from 2003 to Jan 31, 2009 (tentative).

YEAR	Depredations ¹				Wolf Mortality			
	Cattle	Sheep	Dogs	Total	WS ²	10j ³	Other	Total
2003	7	130	3	140	7	0	8	15
2004	19	176	4	199	17	0	21	38
2005	29	166	12	207	24	3	16	43
2006	41	237	4	282	35	7	19	61
2007	57	211	10	278	43	7	27	77
2008	104	215	14	333	94	13	44	151
2009	1		1	2			1	1
Total	247	1133	47	1427	220	30	135	385

¹ Includes confirmed depredations resulting in death or injury

² Authorized take by Wildlife Services

³ Authorized take under 10j or while delisted for protection of stock and dogs

Control

From January 1 – February 1, Wildlife Services confirmed that wolves killed one calf and one guard dog. During the same time frame in 2008, wolves probably killed two sheep.

Research

Idaho Fish and Game researchers captured and collared 30 wolves in 6 packs during aerial capture work during January in two study areas; one north of Boise and one in the Lolo elk zone. Wolves were collared with ARGOS satellite collars. Researchers also collared 31 elk calves, 16 cows, 19 bulls and 12 moose to add to the animals being studied for predator-prey interactions in the same study areas where wolves were collared.

Barbara Fannin and Dave Ausband of the University of Montana recently finished analyzing DNA from hairs obtained at rub pads in fall 2008. Early results indicate wolves did roll on some of the rub pads and deposited sufficient hair for DNA analyses. A report of the rub pad pilot testing is forthcoming.

Information and Education

The Fish and Game director's office has been giving several wolf updates to the state Legislature and to the Fish and Game Commission.

Michael Lucid gave a presentation on wolf biology and management to the Caldwell Rotary Club on January 28.

Further information and updates, including the directives provided by the commission can be viewed at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/>

A reminder: wolves are protected under the endangered species act and killing one illegally is a federal offense.

Please help us manage wolves by reporting wolf sightings on our Fish and Game observation form found at: http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/apps/wolf_report/

Delisting: FWS – Northern Rocky Mountain Wolf Status (WY, MT, ID):

For the time being, all wolves to the north of Interstate- 90 in Idaho remain listed as endangered. All wolves in the southern half of Montana, all portions of Idaho south of Interstate-90, and all of Wyoming are being managed under the 2005 and 2008 Endangered Species Act nonessential experimental population 10j regulations. The Idaho Department of Fish and Game is acting as the designated agent for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in implementing day-to-day management of wolves under the MOU between the Department of Interior and Idaho signed January 2006.

Delisting wolves and assuring their proper long-term management is and has been of highest priority for the state of Idaho and the Fish and Game Department. We continue to work along with the Department of Interior, Department of Justice, and other states and interveners toward the eventual delisting of wolves in the Northern Rocky Mountains, and move toward state management under the State Wolf Conservation and Management Plan and the Wolf Population Management Plan.

New on delisting - The USFWS rewrote the delisting rule based on comments and new administrative record and data, and submitted a final delisting rule in January 2009 but did not post it in the Federal Register. The incoming Obama administration placed a hold

on all pending rules and regulations in order to have time to review them. We have not yet heard results of the review. You may read the State of Idaho's comments to the USFWS on the delisting rule at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/>

You may review past wolf weekly publications on our wolf webpage and links along with all pertinent and updated wolf information and publications at:
<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/>